

West Kootenay Regional Airport – Resuming Passenger Flight Service

Starting October 1, the West Kootenay Regional Airport in Castlegar is launching flight service with [Central Mountain Air](#). Flights will run daily to and from Vancouver, providing connections to other destinations. In Vancouver, flights will arrive and depart from the South Terminal and free taxi vouchers are available to the main terminal at Vancouver International Airport.

What is happening with Air Canada?

On September 14, Air Canada advised that it will not be resuming passenger flights to Castlegar until 2021. Times are tough in the aviation industry, particularly for large airlines. We understand the difficult situation Air Canada is in and the uncertain market conditions its facing.

Passenger flights are extremely important to the West Kootenay Regional Airport and the City has been working tirelessly to return service. When Air Canada returns, there could be more flight options than ever before in the region.

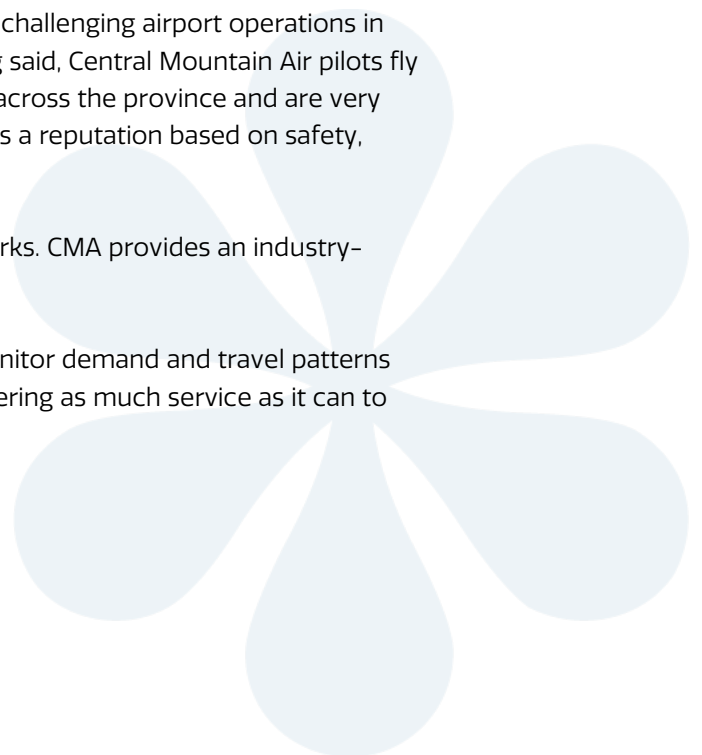
Why is Central Mountain Air a good fit?

Central Mountain Air is a BC-owned and operated company, serving the province since 1987.

As we all know, Castlegar's location is one of the most challenging airport operations in the country due to the beautiful geography. This being said, Central Mountain Air pilots fly many similar airports in the same seasonal conditions across the province and are very proficient in their airmanship abilities. The company has a reputation based on safety, convenience and reliability.

Flying with CMA connects you to broader route networks. CMA provides an industry-leading [Flex Change & Cancellation Policy](#).

CMA offers flexibility and will work with the City to monitor demand and travel patterns and increase the size of aircraft – it's committed to offering as much service as it can to our communities.



What aircraft does Central Mountain Air have?

Initial air service will be provided by the Beech 1900D, an 18 passenger aircraft with a lavatory. Central Mountain Air has access to a fleet of Beech 1900Ds, Dornier 328s and Dash 8 aircraft. The B1900D does not have any seats that are side by side, so physical distancing is implemented on every flight. However, please note that the B1900 aircraft does not have any flight attendants.

Will flights with Central Mountain Air be more reliable?

As we all know, Castlegar's location poses tough challenges for pilots flying in and out. There's always a focus on safety and need to follow the rules. Central Mountain Air pilots fly into various types of airports and season conditions across the province and are very familiar with the West Kootenay terrain.

What's Central Mountain Air's safety record?

CMA has a strong track record of safely delivering passengers since 1987. They are part of the BARS program, an International Aviation Safety Program which utilizes Basic Aviation Risk Standards (BAR Standards) to review aircraft operators supporting companies in the resource sector, humanitarian, government and insurance organizations, in their risk oversight of contracted aviation activities.

What COVID-19 safety precautions is the City taking?

We know air travel looks different these days, but we are here to welcome passengers back and ensure their trip is as easy, stress-free and safe as possible.

The City is committed to doing our part to keep travellers and airport employees healthy and is following all guidelines provided by public health officials and Transport Canada. We are implementing a series of new COVID-19 health and safety measures to ensure the public can feel confident when travelling with us.

Some of the new safety measures include:

- Requiring everyone who enters the terminal to wear a mask and sanitize their hands.
- Requesting passengers say goodbye to friends and family outside the terminal.
- Advising arriving passengers to collect their baggage and immediately exit the building.
- Adding more than 8 hand sanitizer stations.
- Providing extra space to support physical distancing.
- Installing plexiglass barriers and COVID-19 signage.
- Increasing sanitization and cleaning protocols.



Will the flight experience be the same? What can I expect when flying?

COVID-19 has changed many things and the air travel experience will look different. To protect the public and our employees, the West Kootenay Regional Airport now requires everyone who enters the terminal to wear a mask and sanitize their hands. The terminal has a dedicated entrance and exit automatic doors, additional hand sanitizing stations, plexiglass barriers and markers to support physical distancing.

The City is working hard to get the restaurant and car rental services, with Practicar, open for travelers.

CMA is committed to providing you with a safe travel experience. To achieve this, they are following all relevant health authorities and best demonstrated practices in the aviation industry. To read more about precautions they're taking, [click here](#).

Why aren't you offering flights to Calgary?

With the aviation industry the way it is, we're starting small to make sure our return to passenger service is successful. We know travelers want flights to Calgary and we'll look to add flights to Calgary when the time is right. Travelers can connect to Calgary through Vancouver by booking flights through local travel agents and large online travel agencies like Expedia, Priceline and Booking.com.

Why is there only one flight a day and why is it in the middle of the day?

As a result of COVID-19, travel patterns have changes so we're starting small to make sure our return to passenger service is successful. The mid-day flight time was carefully selected to maximize options for connecting flights in Vancouver and recognizing the best time of day for local weather patterns.

Will Central Mountain Air stick around when Air Canada returns?

We can't speak for Central Mountain Air but, when Air Canada returns, there could be more flight options than ever before at the West Kootenay Regional Airport.

How much will a flight cost?

Central Mountain Air offers very competitive pricing that varies based on when you're traveling. The most current pricing is always available at flycma.com. The majority of seats are priced from \$189 to \$329.

Where can I book my flight?

Central Mountain Air provides a user-friendly website for booking flights directly at flycma.com. Connecting fares to major destinations across Canada will be available the



week of September 21 via local travel agents and large online travel agencies like Expedia, Priceline and Booking.com.

Can I use Airmiles or other points to book my flight?

Unfortunately, Airmiles cannot be used to book flights directly through the Central Mountain Air website. However, you may be able to use other loyalty points to book a flight, please check with your credit card provider.

Where else does Central Mountain Air Fly?

Central Mountain Air offers scheduled, charter and cargo flights across a unique network of communities throughout British Columbia, Alberta, and Western Canada. This includes Castlegar, Edmonton, Kamloops, High Level, Vancouver, Fort St. John, Prince George, Terrace, Calgary, and Fort Nelson.

